



Background

The UK Web Archiving Consortium was formed in 2003 out of the recognition that valuable web-based material is being lost to future generations. Six leading UK institutions, including the British Library, the National Archives, National Library of Wales, National Library of Scotland, JISC and the Wellcome Trust, funded this unique collaboration to address the technical and curatorial issues related to web archiving. Working together, the partners selected and archived web sites from the UK domain relevant to their subject interests. The partners also shared the costs, infrastructure and operational environment.

The UK Web Archive

The partners' collective archive is made available online at <http://www.webarchive.org.uk>. The UK Web Archive now contains nearly 5000 web sites with scholarly, cultural, political and scientific importance, and this collection is growing fast.

Archived sites can be searched alphabetically by their titles or URL and browsed by a controlled set of subject categories. Additionally themed collections have been developed to build up topical, in-depth resources.

The National Archives (TNA) and the National Library of Scotland (NLS) have developed individual strategies for collecting web content. TNA has been collecting central UK government websites since 2003 and this archive is available at <http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/webarchive/>. NLS is integrating their web archiving activity into their overall digital collections strategy and will make this content available in the future.

A single point of access to all partner collections is a key area of work for the consortium and we believe this will be of great benefit to end users and the wider community.

The Infrastructure supporting the UK Web Archive is provided by the British Library since 2008.

UKWAC / DPC Collaboration

All UKWAC partners are members of the Digital Preservation Coalition (DPC). The remits of UKWAC and the DPC have significant overlap and both seek to position themselves as a focus for UK activity and a contact point for the wider international community. It is in the interests of both organisations to join up messages to relevant communities. While UKWAC evolved to become a strategic group for providing leadership and encouraging collaborations for UK web

archiving activities, it seemed a natural course of action to join force with the DPC. Collaboration with the DPC reinforces UKWAC's interest in long-term preservation and will be beneficial to the wider web archiving and digital preservation community.

UKWAC / DPC collaborative programme for 2009

- [DPC / UKWAC presentation to DPC board in November 2008](#) (requires Members login)
- [missing Links: the enduring web \(July 21 2009\)](#)
- [Web archiving user requirements study](#)

UKWAC Remit

The remit of UKWAC covers four broad areas in the context of UK web archiving activity.

Collaboration

- To provide a framework for all parties interested in UK web archiving to discuss technical and practical issues
 - To work consorcially to provide a unified selection and archiving practice in the UK
 - To build a community of specialists in the UK
 - To provide a coordinated national profile for UK web archiving facilitating engagement with international initiatives.

Leadership

- To organise and lead events (conferences, workshops etc)
- To actively undertake research and development (e.g. cross-searching multiple collections)
 - To publish technical and managerial information (e.g. a code of conduct for responsible web archiving)
 - To influence funding bodies

Advocacy

- To promote the use of standards and best practice
- To draw attention to the resources available
- Lobbying of government in areas of copyright law and legal deposit

Access

- To establish common access methods and interoperability between organisations
- To work towards enabling a single point of access for UK collections

These activities will take place alongside ongoing work by consortium partners to develop their own collections of archived material; to deal with rights management issues; and to consider preservation issues relating to web archiving practice.

Important Documents:

1. [Collecting & preserving the world wide web: A feasibility study undertaken for the JISC and The Wellcome Trust, February 2003.](#)
2. [Legal issues relating to the archiving of internet resources in the UK, EU, USA and Australia: A study undertaken for the JISC and The Wellcome Trust, February 2003.](#)
3. [UKWAC evaluation report](#)